

## CLAIMS

Having thus set forth and disclosed the nature of this invention, what is claimed is:

1. A vertical traction assembly for using gravity to stretch a person's spine, said assembly comprising:

a) frame means and torso harness means coupled to depend from said frame means,

b) said harness means being effective to maintain a person in a traction position after the person dons said harness means, and

d) focused traction force means attached to the frame means for applying a predetermined amount of focused traction pressure directly to a selected location along the spine of the person who is in said traction position.

2. An assembly as defined in claim 1 wherein

stand means disposed on said frame means includes non-traction receiving surface means on which a person may stand for donning the torso harness means before applying said predetermined amount of focused traction pressure.

3. An assembly as defined in claim 2 wherein

said predetermined amount of focused traction pressure is derived from the weight of the person who is in said traction position.

4. An assembly as defined in claim 3 wherein

said predetermined amount of focused traction pressure is equal to about 40% of said person's weight.

5. An assembly as defined in claim 1 wherein

stand means is mounted to said frame means and includes said non-traction receiving surface and a partial traction receiving surface on which the person may stand to effect adjustment of the harness means with respect to the frame means and the person's torso before being said person is subjected to a full traction treatment,

said harness means being effective to produce a partial traction treatment pressure equal to a desired percentage of a full traction treatment pressure when the person steps from the non-traction receiving surface to said partial traction receiving surface after donning said harness means.

6. An assembly as defined in claim 5 wherein

said desired percentage is about 20% of the full traction treatment pressure which is equal to about 40% of the weight of the person who is in the traction position.

7. An assembly as defined in claim 1 wherein

said frame means is free standing and said harness means depends downwardly from said frame means,

said focused traction force means being effective to derive said focused traction pressure from a portion of the weight of the person in said traction position, and

said traction position is a gravity traction suspension position with said person being vertically suspended with the harness means to produce said focused traction pressure.

8. An assembly as defined in claim 1 wherein

said selected location along the spine of the person includes an inflamed area on the person's back.

9. A vertical traction assembly for using gravity to stretch a person's spine, said assembly comprising:

a) frame means and torso harness means coupled to flexibly depend from said frame means, and

b) stand means mounted to said frame means to provide a non-traction receiving surface on which a person may stand to don the torso harness means and a partial traction receiving surface on which a person may stand to adjust said harness means with respect to the person's torso and assembly before the person voluntarily steps to a vertical, gravity traction suspension position,

c) said harness means being effective to suspend the person from the frame means for a partial traction pressure when the person stands on said partial traction receiving surface after donning said harness means,

e) said partial traction pressure being less than a full traction pressure that is applied to the person who is in said vertical, gravity traction suspension position.

10. A traction assembly for using gravity to stretch a person's spine, said assembly comprising:

a) free standing frame means and harness means effective to releasably gird the torso of a person,

b) said harness means being coupled to flexibly depend from said frame means to suspend the person from the frame means in a gravity traction suspension position, and

c) focused traction force means adjustably connected to the frame means for applying traction pressure directly to a selected location along the spine of the person in said gravity traction suspension position.

11. An assembly as defined in claim 10 wherein

said frame means includes backboard means for supporting an upper body portion of the person who is girded with said harness means and suspended in said gravity traction suspension position.

12. An assembly as defined in claim 11 wherein

said backboard means includes said focused traction force means having releasable tightening means for selectively securing the focused traction force means to a plurality of vertical locations along said backboard means.

13. An assembly as defined in claim 10 wherein

said frame means includes a front rearwardly tilted frame portion including backboard means,

said focused traction force means includes pad element means adjustably mounted to the backboard means and releasable fastening means for selectively positioning the pad element means with respect to a person using said assemble to undergo vertical traction treatment in a full suspension position.

14. An assembly as defined in claim 10 wherein

said focused traction force means is effective to direct a traction force equal to a fraction of the person's weight at said selected location along the spine of said person.

15. An assembly as defined in claim 14 wherein

said traction force is equal to about 40% of the person's weight.

16. A traction method for treating an inflamed area adjacent a person's backbone, said method comprising:

a) providing frame means and torso girding means coupled to flexibly depend from said frame means,

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- b) girding said person with said torso girding means,
  - c) deriving a horizontally directed traction pressure from the weight of said person who is in a vertical, gravity traction suspension position, and
  - d) applying said traction pressure directly to said inflamed area along the spine of said person while suspended in said vertical, gravity traction suspension position.

17. A method as defined in claim 16 wherein  
said traction pressure is equal to about 40% of said person's  
body weight.

18. A method as defined in claim 16 wherein  
said applying step includes a treatment cycle having a plurality of  
abbreviated traction sessions in which said person is suspended in  
said vertical, gravity traction suspension position, and  
said traction sessions are separated with respect to each other with  
a rest period without traction.

19. A method as defined in claim 18 wherein  
each said traction session has a duration of up to 90 seconds and  
each rest period has a duration of up to 90 seconds.